

**House Committee on  
Elections Request for  
Information**

**Submitted by:  
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Chairman  
Harris County Republican Party Ballot Security Committee**

**3. Strengthening Voter Integrity & Fair Elections**

If a voter registration applicant provides neither the last 4 digits of their SSN nor the number from a valid (and free) state identification card, the voter registrar should be compelled to vet the applicant and require documentation to prove citizenship & residency.

Elevate to jail-time felony status the crime of registering to vote with a residence address which is actually a post office box. In Texas, operatives are “packing the district” by moving voters in and out of districts with elections pending. They circumvent the optical reader technology trained to recognize the characters “P.O.” by registering at the street address of a commercial postal box store and tagging their mailbox number as an “apartment number.”

Currently, reporting such improperly registered voters triggers only a mailed request from the county voter registrar and having the voter placed on “suspense,” which means nothing. These voters have falsified a government document by claiming a postal box the place where they actually reside. The abuse won’t change until the penalties are elevated and enforced.

The interstate voter registration cooperation process is ineffective. We are investigating a voting fraud ring. In the process of interviewing voters who might have committed a crime, we uncovered a real mess. In the November 2018 general election, nearly 19,000 voters registered in both Texas and Oklahoma voted in both states in that election. We are currently gathering data from Louisiana, Colorado and New Mexico to determine how widespread the problem is.

We need to extend the statute of limitations for election fraud offenses. We recently concluded a two-year investigation of mail ballot harvesting in Harris County. The OAG always insists that the evidence presented must include some indication that actual ballots were voted by the perpetrators. By law, we couldn’t access the actual mail ballots cast until 22 months after the election.

By the time we were able to examine the actual ballots to PROVE that a harvester had actually voted the ballots, and packaged all that on a silver platter for the OAG, the OAG says it can’t take action because the statute of limitations has expired. We will never prosecute large ballot harvesting operations effectively, if we don’t extend the statute of limitations.

Voter list maintenance should include annual comparisons of Texas voter rolls with the DHS database of non-citizens residing in Texas. That should be new legislation of high priority.

The SOS should be given the authority and be directed to audit county voter rolls on a regular basis, and to direct corrections accordingly. The SOS should receive from each county district clerk data on prospective jurors who opted out of jury duty by claiming non-citizenship. The SOS should be authorized to direct county registrars to remove those voters from the rolls and to confirm compliance.

At least in Harris County, voter outreach programs funded with public funds, favor coordination with public interest groups from only one side of the political spectrum. We need legislation that requires that any time an election authority finances voter outreach programs, that program must include public interest groups from both sides of the political spectrum.

Harris County is going to experiment with “Drive Through Voting” in the November 2020 general election. We’ll have election workers at all 10 of the DTV sites and can provide feedback on the pros and cons of this approach.

Alabama and Wyoming require photocopies of appropriate ID with every mail ballot application and every mail ballot. Texas should also adopt that BBM requirement. We have met with OAG investigators in our pursuit of ballot harvesters in Harris County. The investigators have told us that mail ballot fraud in nursing homes and assisted living centers is “out of control.” New legislation should place specific election training requirements on the owners/managers/staffs of such facilities.

In the 2017 Regular Session, Representative Oliverson successfully sponsored a bill to eliminate mail ballots in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The bill received bipartisan support, passing in the House with 139 “aye” votes. It was signed into law by the governor.

The Texas Association of Elections Administrators mounted a smear campaign, persuading county commissioners from various Texas counties to complain to the governor that sending 2 election judges to a nursing home for 3 hours costs as much as running an early voting polling place for 2 weeks. They complained that it was an “unfunded mandate.” The governor swallowed the story and directed that the nursing home voting bill be repealed in the 2017 Special Session. That approach should be re-examined and reconsidered. (Through PIA we obtained all the documents generated by the TAEA and can provide them to the committee if requested.)

Anecdotally, this week I lectured on election integrity in a course on Public Policy and Administration at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. There were 3 foreign students in the class—Brazil, India and Mexico. In the course of the class, the foreign students berated the American students because their countries have so much more respect for the integrity of elections than do Texas or the U.S. As the foreign students described election procedures in their respective countries, the American students were stunned. The conclusion was that Texas and the U.S. have a long way to go before our election integrity approaches the levels of at least Brazil and India.